

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANILA 12912 180742Z

ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO USDA FAS WASHDC PRIORITY

SECSTATE WASHDC 3899

UNCLAS MANILA 12912

FOR SEC. BERGLAND PASS ADM. HUGHES, FAS

PASS FOR EB/OF/FPD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR

SUBJ: PRESIDENT OF WFC TANCO APPEALS TO SEC. BERGLAND AND

U.S. CONGRESS NOT TO IMPOSE PRODUCTION RESTRICTIONS,

CODE 11 ALERT 1

TOFAS 129/PH7028.

1. ON AUGUST 17, 1977 THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC. HELD A DINNER IN HONOR OF SEC. TANCO. ACTING IN HIS POSITION AS PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL, SEC. TANCO MADE A SINCERE APPEAL TO SEC. BERGLAND AND TO THE U.S. CONGRESS NOT TO IMPOSE PRODUCTION RESTRICTIONS ON WHEAT AND OTHER FOOD CROPS.

2. A SUMMARY OF SEC. TANCO'S SPEECH FOLLOWS:

SET ASIDE ACREAGE FOR WHEAT AND OTHER FOOD CROPS WOULD BE A "DISASTER" BECAUSE IT WOULD CONDEMN MILLIONS OF PEOPLE THROUGH -- OUT THE WORLD WHO ARE IN HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION TO FURTHER HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION. IN 1973-74, THERE WAS A WORLD FOOD

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 MANILA 12912 180742Z

CALAMITY FOLLOWING EXCELLENT PRODUCTION IN 1968-72. IN 1968-72 THE WORLD'S FOUR MAJOR GRAIN PRODUCERS WERE FACED WITH SURPLUS PRODUCTION AND WITH LOW PRICES. PRODUCTION RESTRAINTS WERE IMPOSED AND PRODUCTION DROPPED FROM ABOUT 60 MILLION TONS/YEAR TO ABOUT 40 MILLION TONS/YEAR. WITHOUT THE PRODUCTION LIMITATIONS AN ADDITIONAL 90 MILLION TONS OF WHEAT WOULD HAVE BEEN PRODUCED WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT TO AVOID THE 1973-74

CRISIS. THERE IS A LESSON TO BE LEARNED FROM THIS EXPERIENCE AND THE "INCONSTANCY" OF WEATHER IS A FACTOR THAT MUST BE CONSIDERED WHEN MAKING A DECISION ON CROP PRODUCTION POLICY.

THE INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE HAS STATED THAT IT IS NOW THE TIME TO BUILD WORLD GRAIN RESERVES TO INSURE A STABLE SUPPLY. THIS IS THE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM- A WORLD GRAIN RESERVE AGREEMENT THAT WILL BENEFIT BOTH IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS.

THE U.S. CANNOT TAKE UNILATERAL ACTION WHEN MILLIONS OF OTHER PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WILL BE AFFECTED. THE WORLD CANNOT AFFORD TO REDUCE PRODUCTION AS LONG AS HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION EXIST. WE CANNOT REPEAT DISASTROUS FOOD POLICIES OF THE PAST -- WE CANNOT LET THE PAST BECOME PROLOGUE.

3. COMMENT. TONE OF SPEECH WAS SERIOUS AND SPOKEN IN SENSE OF DEEP CONCERN AND URGENCY. REFERENCE TO PREVIOUS FOOD POLICY DECISIONS TO REDUCE AND CONTROL GRAIN PRODUCTION CITED AS CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM.
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